



How agentic AI can help unlock enterprise value at scale

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AI adoption is rising, yet enterprise value lags. Unlock the hidden 75% across silos with agentic AI and enterprise value stream orchestration.

In brief

- Enterprise value from AI adoption remains constrained as organizations focus on functional optimization rather than end-to-end value flows.
- Up to 75% of value remains trapped across silos, requiring agentic AI to orchestrate workflows and enable integrated, enterprise-wide decision-making.
- Organizations that redesign value flows using AI orchestration – not just automation – can unlock scalable impact and sustain competitive advantage.

Across boardrooms globally, CEOs are operating under some of the most intense performance pressure seen in decades. Growth expectations remain elevated despite geopolitical instability and economic uncertainty. Investors are demanding visible financial discipline and operational resilience, while simultaneously expecting organizations to accelerate innovation and improve market agility to boost productivity and returns. Against this backdrop, one mandate from boards has become increasingly explicit: leverage agentic AI to deliver measurable value.

Yet despite years of investment, most organizations remain trapped in pilot mode. Proof of concept continues to proliferate and AI activity across the board accelerates rapidly, but enterprise impact and value creation are not moving at the same pace.

[EY's 2025 Work Reimagined Survey](#) captures this disconnect clearly: while 88% of employees now use AI at work, only 28% of organizations are positioned to translate that activity into meaningful business outcomes.

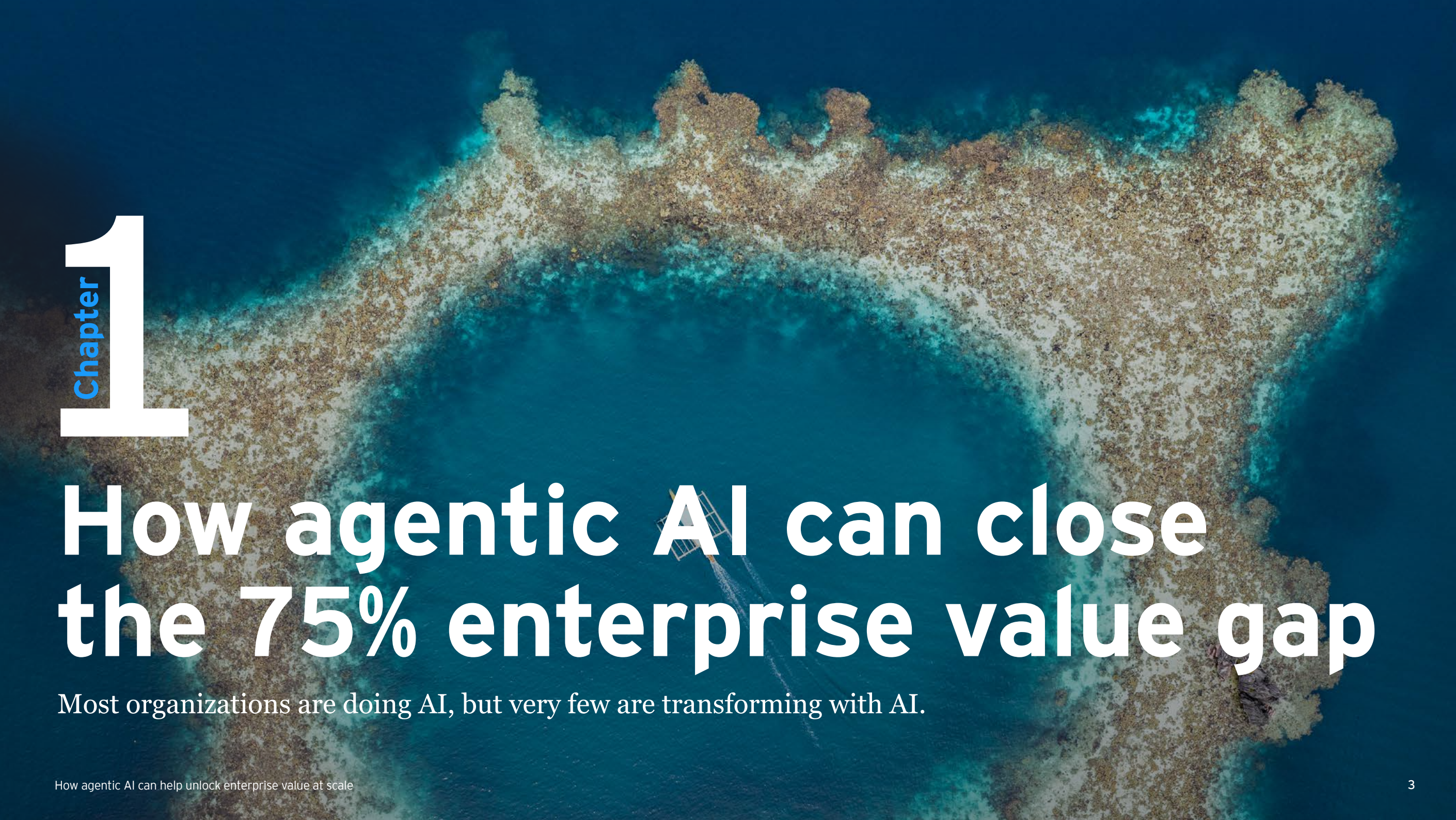
In this article we explore how a missing link could be strategic design and execution of AI, including agentics: governed AI agents that can coordinate workflows, decisions and actions across functions.

This article is the first in our Agentic Enterprise thought leadership series. It explores why AI adoption has yet to

scale across most enterprises, identifies the gaps in today's operating models and technology architectures, and outlines the critical capabilities organizations must establish to unlock and compound AI's full value potential.

The broader C-suite strategies for AI-enabled enterprise reimagination series, will examine the strategic, operational, and technology shifts required to create sustainable competitive advantage in an AI-driven future. The series will cover the following topics:

Article 1:	How agentic AI can help unlock enterprise value at scale
Article 2:	Competitive environment – value chains, margins and disruption
Article 3:	Broader economy – jobs, inequality and macro scenarios
Article 4:	Governance & risk – guardrails, trust and upside capture
Article 5:	Organization development and leadership – ownership, pace and skills
Article 6:	Board interaction – how boards should act in the AI world

An aerial photograph of a coral reef in deep blue water. A small boat is visible in the lower center, leaving a white wake. The reef is composed of various shades of brown, tan, and white coral structures.

Chapter 1

How agentic AI can close the 75% enterprise value gap

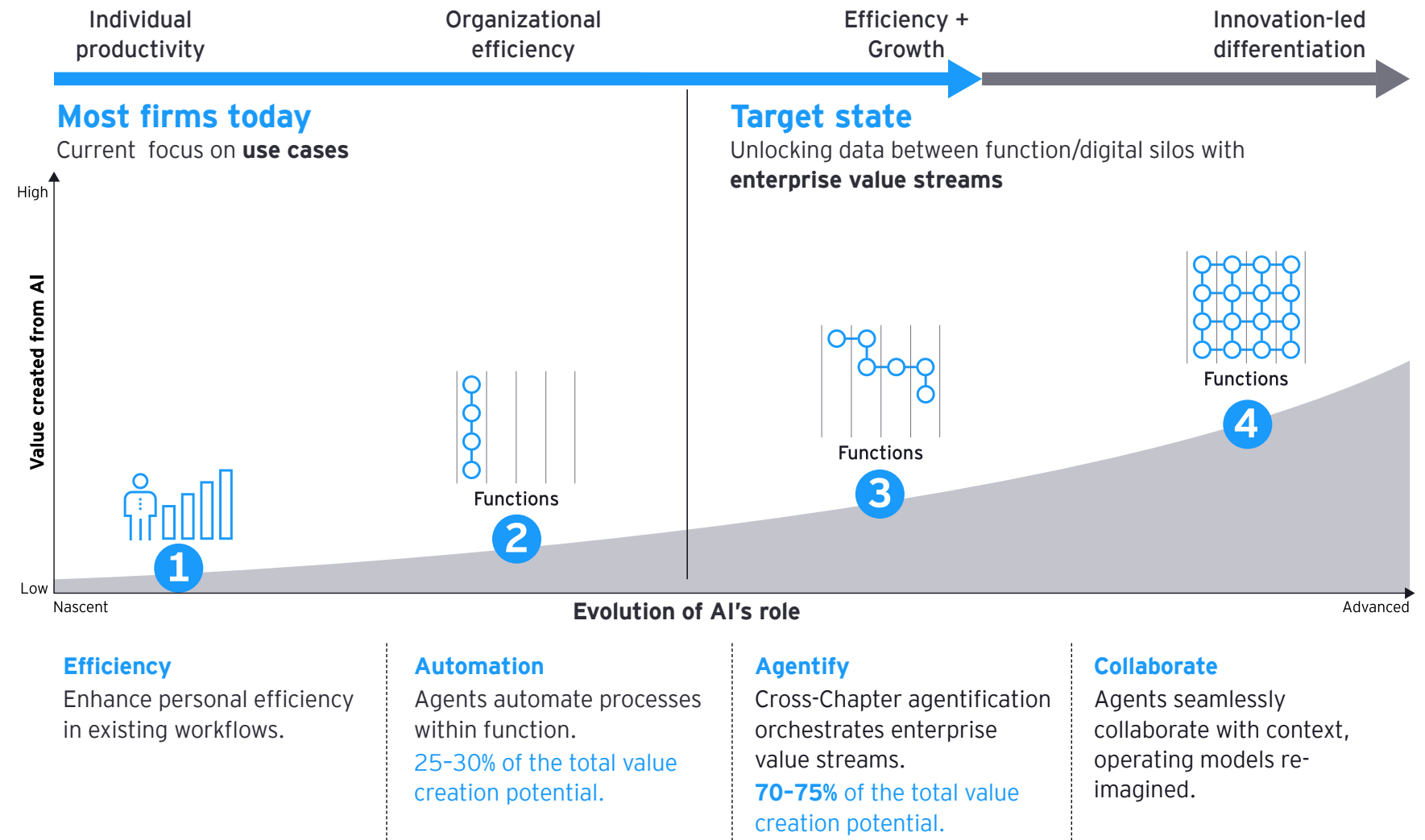
Most organizations are doing AI, but very few are transforming with AI.

Mind the 75% gap

Every function – finance, supply chain, HR, manufacturing or customer service – has its own growing list of automation or insights initiatives. These localized projects improve functional efficiency but rarely scale to enterprise-wide impact. Organizations are investing significantly in more models and tools, but the sources of delay, rework and decision friction that shape enterprise performance remain largely untouched.

In practice, we see most organizations deploying AI in ways that mirror existing organizational boundaries rather than focusing on the flow of value across them. Functional leaders naturally tend to anchor AI ambition around near-term, demonstrable returns within their sphere of influence, resulting in activity to optimize existing processes and ways of working. AI is applied primarily for cost-out and automating predictable tasks to improve productivity rather than reimagining for end-to-end organizational agility and overall cost-to-serve. While the in-function initiatives deliver some productivity gains and help stabilize core functional operations, they are structurally limited in enterprise impact.

This is because only a minority of the overall value creation potential sits within individual functions and the majority, often as much as 70-75%, is trapped in the silos between them



Unlocking this trapped value requires activating cross-functional workflows at scale (we call these enterprise value streams) that will address decision-making friction, approval latency, coordination overhead, analysis duplication, rework loops and fragmented accountability.

These friction factors rarely appear clearly on organizational charts or financial statements, yet collectively they shape enterprise responsiveness, execution speed, operating cost, customer experience, and ultimately value creation.

This is the hidden '75% gap' and remains largely untouched by today's AI efforts. This mismatch explains why organizations are doing more AI every year but not seeing the compounding effect of AI in enterprise results.

A recent automotive original equipment manufacturer (OEM) transformation value estimation led by EY-Parthenon illustrates the scale of the opportunity. Total AI- and digital-enabled value creation potential exceeded US\$2.4b, of which nearly US\$2b came from enterprise value streams.

How EY-Parthenon can help

EY-Parthenon Edge Platforms: AI-powered Tech for Strategy and M&A

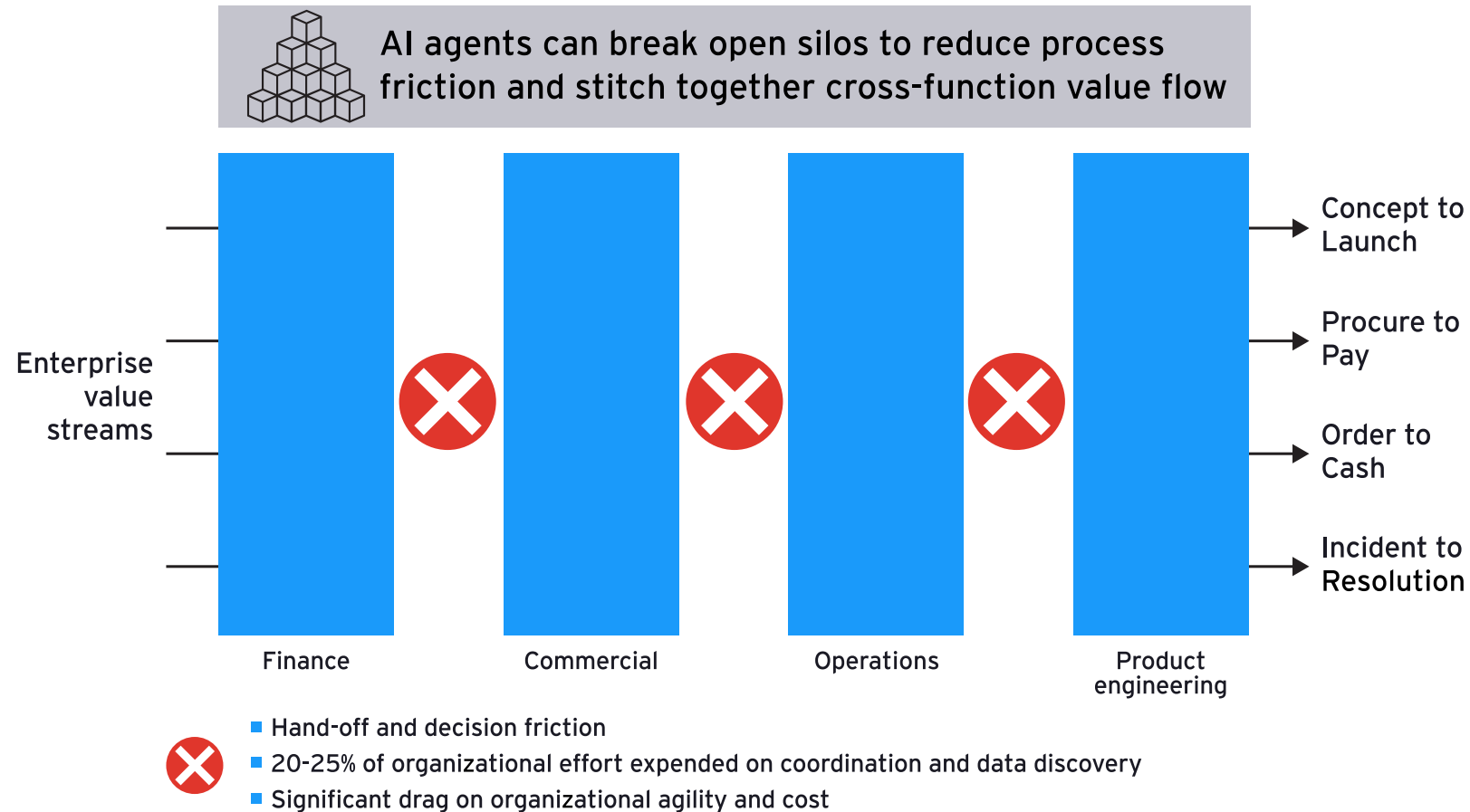
Why enterprise AI fails to compound value

The root cause lies in the architecture of the modern enterprise itself. Over decades, organizations and the systems supporting them evolved vertically around functions, reporting hierarchies and control structures. Enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer relationship management (CRM), human resources information systems (HRIS), product lifecycle management (PLM) and workflow platforms were designed primarily to optimize functional execution, governance and control. But enterprise value does not flow vertically. It flows horizontally across customer journeys and product lifecycles through cross-functional operational value streams such as concept-to-launch, order-to-cash, procure-to-pay and service incident-to-resolution.

This creates a fundamental structural tension: people, systems, key performance indicators (KPIs) and governance are organized vertically, while value creation flows horizontally. Where these intersect, friction emerges. In most enterprises, a substantial proportion of effort is consumed not for value creation itself, but for managing the friction between silos.

In the recent automotive OEM example, the Incident-to-Resolution process spans across eight functions, touches a number of enterprise systems and requires significant human intervention, with 15-25% of the effort in warranty management spent on internal coordination activity rather than solving customer or operational problems directly.

Friction at decision points



Traditional AI initiatives rarely address this problem because they inherit the same structural boundaries as the organization itself. This is where agentic AI – governed AI agents capable of stitching together the cross-functional workflows across systems, data and functional silos, with humans in the loop – becomes central to value creation.

Five barriers preventing AI from scaling enterprise value

1

AI is currently being used to optimize functions rather than enterprise value flow

Most AI programs focus on improving existing functional activities rather than redesigning how value moves across the organization. This creates incremental efficiency improvements but limited enterprise agility. As a result, organizations optimize locally while enterprise-level friction persists globally.

2

AI is being wrapped around existing processes

Many organizations are layering AI onto current operating models rather than redesigning them. This matters because AI wrapped around fragmented workflows simply accelerates fragmentation. Instead of fundamentally improving enterprise flow, AI risks becoming a sophisticated incremental efficiency layer sitting on top of structurally inefficient processes. The result is faster execution of the same broken coordination model.

3

Enterprise data and systems remain fragmented

Most enterprise architectures were never designed for AI-native cross-functional coordination. Critical information remains fragmented across ERP, CRM, engineering, operational and supply chain platforms. Teams still spend enormous effort reconciling data, validating assumptions and resolving inconsistencies across systems that were designed independently around functional priorities. This fragmentation creates hidden operational drag that scales with organizational complexity.

4

Organizations lack a shared intelligence and context layer

This is the most consequential barrier – and arguably the least understood. To operate effectively across systems, functions and workflows, AI agents require organizational context. Without this shared context layer, AI agents can analyse data in silo but cannot coordinate decisions coherently across enterprise value streams. This intelligence layer – enabled through ontologies, semantic models, knowledge graphs and contextual reasoning – is not optional infrastructure. It is the architectural foundation that allows AI to compound value across the enterprise. Without it, AI scales activity. With it, AI scales decision quality and enterprise value flow.

5

Governance and operating models have not evolved

Despite rapidly increasing AI investment, most organizations still govern AI through fragmented functional structures. In most organizations, AI activity is measured while enterprise impact is not; governance remains episodic rather than continuous; and accountability remains vertical rather than cross-functional. As a result, AI programs scale experimentation faster than they scale enterprise performance.

Chapter

2

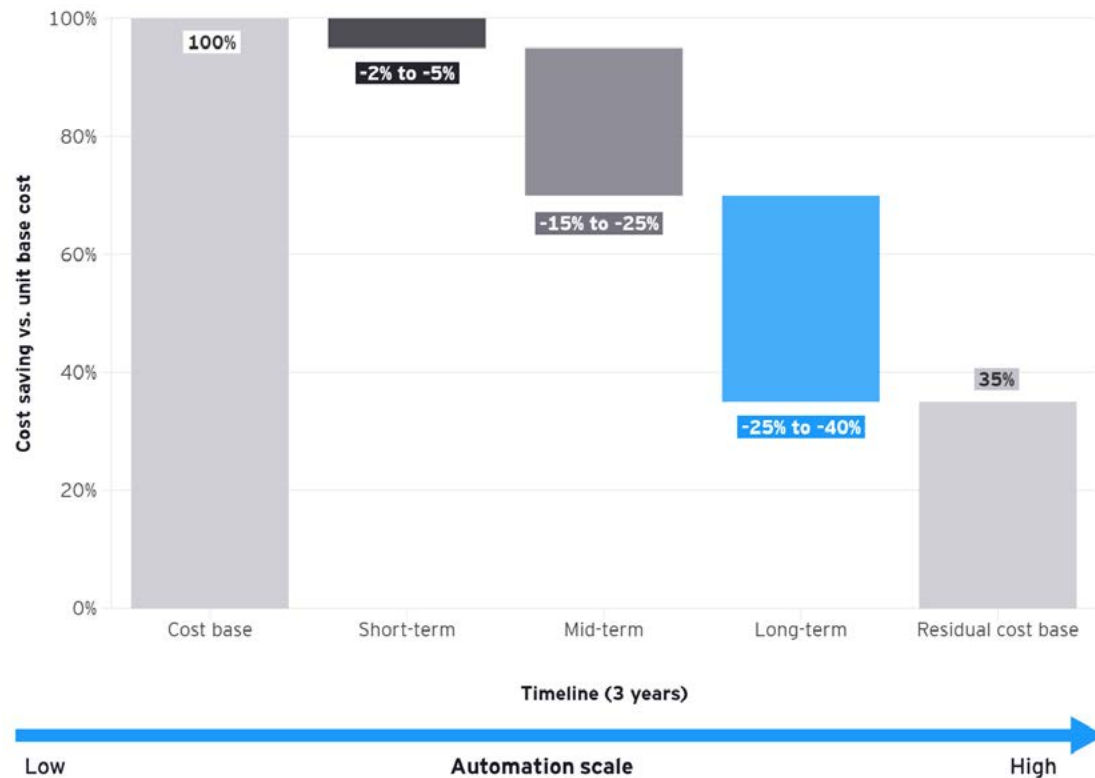
The Agentic Enterprise

The Agentic Enterprise uses AI-driven orchestration to coordinate workflows, decisions and value streams across the organization with humans guiding oversight.

The next phase of enterprise transformation will not be defined by isolated AI tools. It will be defined by AI-enabled orchestration. This is the emergence of the Agentic Enterprise. In the Agentic Enterprise, AI no longer operates only as an assistant to individual workers. AI agents coordinate workflows, decisions and operational activity across functions, systems and value streams. AI begins to act horizontally rather than vertically. Instead of relying on manual coordination between siloed teams, organizations increasingly use AI agents to orchestrate cross-functional workflows, coordinate decisions across systems and surface risks and bottlenecks in real time.

The transformation lies in enabling value to flow more intelligently across them. Intelligent orchestration, with humans increasingly acting as supervisors, conductors and exception managers rather than process coordinators, is more realistic than wholesale structural redesign.

Rise in autonomous agents



Evolution of an office worker in the AI era



The next step is clear: mapping the foundational operating model architecture that must be built to make that progression possible. This path runs through a structured intelligence layer that gives AI agents the context, consistency and autonomy to act at enterprise scale. Building that architecture is the strategic priority that determines which organizations get there first.

The seven-layer operating model of the Agentic Enterprise

The Agentic Enterprise requires a new enterprise operating architecture. In this model, AI becomes an embedded strategic enterprise capability woven across seven interconnected operating model layers.

Agentic Enterprise Operating Model

Layers	Description
1 Business/Customer Outcomes	Measurable goals that define success such as profitability, working capital, and customer satisfaction
2 Key Business Decisions	Cross-functional decisions that directly influence business and customer outcomes
3 Processes and Workflows	Lean, orchestrated activities enabling decisions across enterprise value streams
4 Agent orchestration Layer*	AI agents execute, coordinate and optimize workflows across functions and systems
5 Intelligence/context layer*	Semantic data, ontologies and business rules providing shared context across enterprise entities and events
6 Enterprise systems (Systems of Record)	Core systems storing authoritative data and transactions (not complex business logic or workflows)
7 Infrastructure	Cloud, network, security and compute foundation supporting enterprise systems and layers

The “Agentic Enterprise Operating Model” chart presents the model’s layers, from business and customer outcomes at the top to infrastructure at the foundation. The same layers and descriptions are explained in the text.

1 Business/Customer Outcomes

At the top sits the enterprise outcome layer – where AI continuously optimizes strategic objectives such as growth, cash flow and operational resilience. This is ultimately where AI becomes measurable as enterprise performance.

2 Key Business Decisions

This layer governs how decisions are executed, escalated, and monitored operationally across the organization. Humans remain embedded where judgment, accountability, ethics, or regulatory oversight are required.

3 Processes and Workflows

Lean, orchestrated activities that execute decisions across enterprise value streams, connecting strategy to operational delivery.

4 Agent Orchestration Layer

Above the intelligence layer sits the orchestration layer, where AI agents coordinate workflows, decisions, and actions dynamically across systems and functions, orchestrating value flow across enterprise value streams. Governance, security, compliance, risk management, and human oversight are embedded – and across other layers of the operating model – ensuring AI-enabled decisions

and actions remain transparent, controlled, and aligned with enterprise objective.

5 Intelligence/Context Layer

This is the most strategically important layer – and This is the most strategically important layer – and the one most organizations have not yet built. Here, shared enterprise meaning is created through semantic models, ontologies, knowledge graphs, and contextual relationships. This layer establishes common understanding across customers, products, suppliers, financial entities, operational states, and risks. Without this layer, agents may act, but they cannot act coherently across functions. The intelligence layer is the precondition for enterprise-wide orchestration.

6 Enterprise Systems (Systems of Record)

ERP, CRM, HRIS, PLM, and operational systems continue to manage transactional integrity, compliance, and core enterprise records. However, their role increasingly shifts from being systems of workflow logic toward systems of record.

7 Infrastructure

At the foundation sits scalable cloud, compute, cybersecurity, and data infrastructure capable of supporting enterprise-wide AI orchestration securely and reliably.

Strategic implications for CIOs and CFOs on enterprise technology investments

As agentic AI and intelligence layers mature, traditional enterprise systems increasingly evolve toward stable systems of record rather than heavily customized workflow engines. Critical orchestration, business logic and cross-functional coordination progressively move into the intelligence and agentic layers. For CIOs and CFOs, this changes the technology investment thesis fundamentally, decreasing customization and increasing flexibility. This could materially reduce the brittleness, complexity and cost of future enterprise transformation programs.

Implications for CEOs and boards on the enterprise operating model

The implications extend far beyond just technology architecture: as enterprises evolve toward agentic operating models, leadership itself changes.

Today, executive teams primarily manage through vertical functions and retrospective reporting structures. In the Agentic Enterprise, leadership increasingly steers the organization through real-time enterprise signals tied directly to strategic outcomes. Decision-making becomes faster because AI continuously breaks down issues, surfaces dependencies and orchestrates workflows across functions.

New leadership constructs emerge: Value Stream Leaders, Agent Owners and Enterprise Orchestrators. Governance shifts from silo oversight toward continuous enterprise steering. Functional expertise, regulatory control and domain depth remain essential. The transformation lies in how work, information and decisions flow across them.



What's next – four steps to enterprise value

The path to the Agentic Enterprise does not begin with a transformation program. It begins with a single, well-chosen outcome. If AI has been deployed across your functions for several years but enterprise performance has not materially shifted, the critical question is whether AI is being applied to the right unit of value. The Agentic Enterprise reference reframes AI as a mechanism for orchestrating value flow through the enterprise – which is where meaningful returns emerge.

For most organizations, the practical starting point is narrower than the ambition. We recommend four steps to begin the transition:

How EY-Parthenon can help

AI Strategy Services

Step 1

Start by choosing the top 3-4 enterprise-critical business outcomes – cash, quality, customer satisfaction, product launch – where delays or friction visibly hurt performance. These are the outcomes that will make the case and demonstrate that AI can change how the business runs, not just how individuals work.

Step 2

Identify the top 3-4 enterprise value streams that have the most materiality to deliver these outcomes. Shift the conversation from use cases to the key decisions that drive each outcome, and redesign how those decisions flow across functions. Design the AI transformation program around these enterprise value streams. This will help build a sufficient value creation business case to support the investment required in foundational capabilities, which on their own will find it difficult to justify the business case.

Step 3

Assign a senior owner to each value stream outcome and make it the test case for a more connected, AI-enabled way of running the business. Assigning horizontal accountability to someone senior whose remit transcends functional boundaries is essential.

Step 4

Invest in the enterprise intelligence and context layer, then introduce an agentic AI orchestration layer to manage governed agents across enterprise value streams.

The next frontier of enterprise value

The organizations that win with AI will not be the ones that deploy the most pilots, build the most models, or automate the most tasks. They will be the ones that use AI to redesign how the enterprise itself operates. The real prize is not the 25% of value trapped inside functions – it is the 75% lost between them.

In the months and years ahead, the question will no longer be whether organizations adopted AI, but whether AI fundamentally changed how value flows through the business. This is the crucial shift that CEOs now face: from using AI to optimize work to using AI to orchestrate the enterprise. The gap between those two ambitions will define the next generation of market leaders.

Are you ready to close the 75% gap?

A photograph of two men in dark suits and ties walking away from the camera down a long, brightly lit hallway. The hallway has a light-colored tiled floor and a wall of vertical metal slats on the left. Large shadows are cast on the floor from the right side.

About the authors

This article contains EY-Parthenon analysis based on aggregated and anonymized data from client engagements.

The following individuals contributed to this white paper:

Will Auchincloss
EY-Parthenon

Nils Melcher
EY-Parthenon

Suraj Ramprasad
EY-Parthenon

Gaurav Batra
EY



Will Auchincloss

Will is the EY-Parthenon Americas Retail Sector Leader. He brings more than 20 years of consulting and business leadership experience and advises senior leadership teams on corporate strategy, enterprise-wide transformation, digital strategy and operating model design.

Before joining EY-Parthenon, Will was a principal at another consulting firm and led an advanced analytics practice focused on performance improvement through machine learning. He has served clients across North America, EMEA and APAC in a range of sectors.



Nils Melcher

Nils is the EY-Parthenon EMEA Growth Platforms and Neurosymbolic AI (NSAI) Leader and a seasoned growth and innovation leader who works with organizations to unlock new sources of value through disruptive technology. He brings a strong track record in translating bold ambition into sustainable growth and value creation.

At EY-Parthenon, he applies structured growth methodologies like business building and emerging technologies such as NSAI to enable clients to create new revenue streams and strengthen competitive positioning. His work spans multiple sectors, supporting organizations in navigating complex transformation journeys.



Suraj Ramprasad

Suraj is the EY AI and Digital Strategy Leader for the UK and Ireland, with a focus on value creation, and leads the EY.ai Value Accelerator proposition globally. Before joining EY, he was a Managing Director at Teneo, where he established and built the Digital Strategy and Transformation practice.

Suraj works with senior executives to assess the impact of AI and digital disruption, evaluate organizational readiness, identify innovative propositions that unlock business value, and define the business and technology capabilities required to realize that value. He also helps shape transformation agendas and build the case for change.



Gaurav Batra

Gaurav is an Associate Director, Ernst & Young LLP, experienced in technology, data, artificial intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and alliances. As part of the Thematic Insights team, he shapes EY perspectives on cross-cutting technologies by synthesizing diverse signals, developing high-impact insights and advancing technology-led narratives.

He supports the development of distinctive, market-facing thought leadership to help clients navigate the strategic and commercial implications of emerging technologies.

Gaurav brings more than two decades of experience in research, insights, commercial strategy and transformation across industrials, energy and mobility. He has led global insights teams, built proprietary analytics solutions and collaborated closely with account and sector leadership.

Frequently asked questions

about agentic AI and enterprise value

What is agentic AI?

Agentic AI is a type of AI that can coordinate tasks, decisions and workflows across systems and functions. Unlike traditional AI that supports individual tasks, agentic AI helps orchestrate end-to-end enterprise processes with humans in the loop.

How is agentic AI different from traditional AI?

Traditional AI usually improves isolated tasks such as forecasting, automation or content generation. Agentic AI goes further by connecting decisions and actions across workflows, systems and teams, which enables broader enterprise coordination and value creation.

How does agentic AI improve enterprise value?

Agentic AI improves enterprise value by reducing decision friction, coordination delays, rework and handoff issues across silos. This helps organizations improve speed, efficiency and business outcomes across end-to-end value streams.

What is the enterprise AI value gap?

The enterprise AI value gap refers to the disconnect between increasing AI adoption and limited enterprise-wide value creation, with up to 75% of value trapped across functional silos.

Why do most AI initiatives fail to deliver enterprise impact?

Most AI efforts focus on optimizing individual functions rather than enabling cross-functional workflows, limiting their ability to scale enterprise value and performance.

What is the '75% value gap' in AI?

The 75% value gap represents the majority of value that remains locked between organizational silos, where decision friction and coordination challenges reduce enterprise performance.

How can Organizations close the enterprise AI value gap?

Organizations can close the gap by using agentic AI to orchestrate cross-functional workflows, reduce friction, and enable coordinated decision-making across value streams.

What is agentic AI in the enterprise context?

Agentic AI refers to AI systems that can coordinate tasks, decisions, and workflows across functions, enabling enterprise-wide orchestration rather than isolated automation.

What is an agentic enterprise?

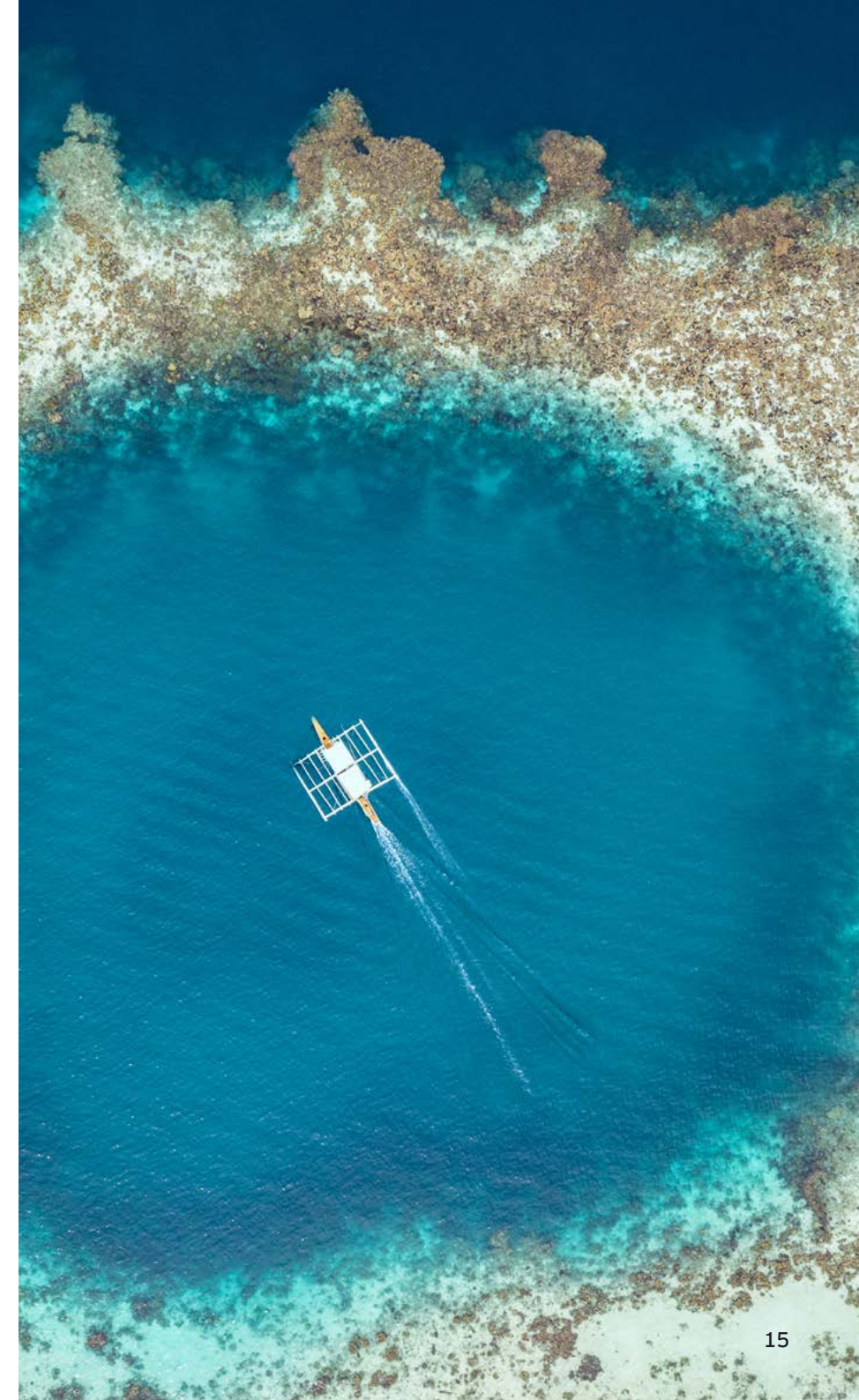
An agentic enterprise is an organization where AI agents orchestrate operations, workflows and decisions across systems to drive enterprise-wide value creation and agility.

Why is cross-functional orchestration critical for AI success?

Enterprise value flows across functions, not within them. Orchestration ensures AI connects workflows end-to-end, unlocking hidden value and improving performance outcomes.

What role does data and context play in scaling AI?

A shared intelligence and context layer enables AI to interpret data consistently across systems, ensuring coordinated and effective decision-making at enterprise scale.



Summary

AI adoption is accelerating, yet enterprise value creation remains limited. Close the 75% value gap by using agentic AI to connect workflows and unlock cross-functional enterprise value at scale.

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